

Lynx Protection Zone and Trap Restrictions

Canada lynx are a federally listed Threatened Species. There is no open season for the trapping or hunting of lynx in Maine. Department biologists have confirmed the presence of reproducing lynx in northern Maine. To protect lynx and to help Maine trappers avoid accidentally taking lynx, the Department has delineated a lynx protection zone in northern Maine where special regulations are in effect.

Foothold traps

- **Statewide:** When set on dry land, traps must have at least three swiveling points (at the base of the trap, midway in the chain, and at the trap's anchoring point). Foothold traps cannot be set above ground or snow level.
- **WMDs 1-11, 14, 18, and 19:** When set on dry land, the use of drags is prohibited and the catch circle must be cleared of woody vegetation, debris and manmade material that could cause entanglement of a trapped animal.
- **In WMDs 1-6 and 8-11** no foothold trap may be used that has an inside jaw spread of more than 5 3/8 inches unless when set, placed, and tended the trap is fully or partially covered by water.

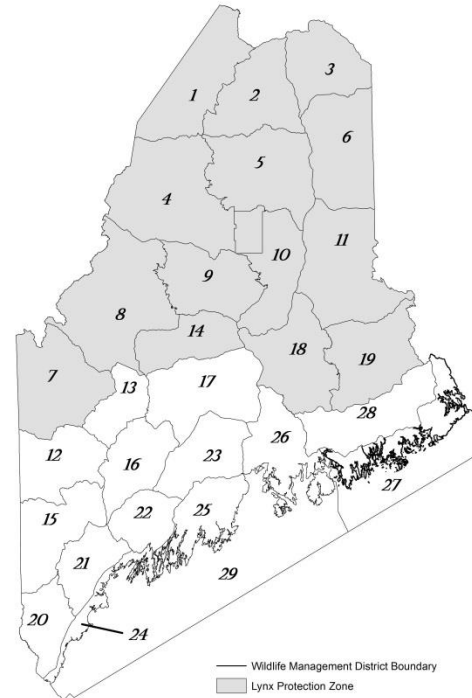
Killer-type (conibear) traps:

Must be set within a lynx exclusion device when set on dry land, *except* that killer-type traps with an inside jaw spread of 5 inches or less may be set without an exclusion device if the trap is set so as to be partially covered by water at all times, set under an overhanging stream bank, or used at a blind set (without the use of bait, lure or visible attractor).

What do I do if I catch a lynx?

Incidental capture of lynx must be reported to a game warden or biologist of the Department as soon as possible and prior to removing the animal from the trap, unless a Department official cannot be reached in time to prevent injury to the lynx. Any lynx released under this provision must be reported to the Department within 24 hours from this time it was discovered. A person who catches a lynx must call the lynx hotline at **(207) 592-4734**, or a local game warden as soon as possible. The lynx hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the trapping season. In most circumstances a biologist will tranquilize, examine, and release the lynx. For more information on lynx biology or the Department's lynx research efforts, please contact Jennifer Vashon at (207) 941-4466. If you catch a cat and are uncertain whether it is a bobcat or a lynx, contact a wildlife biologist or warden immediately.

Canada Lynx Protection Zone for Trapping Restrictions



Regulations for Specific Types of Traps

The **statewide** foothold trapping regulations when set on dry land are as follows:

- Foothold traps must not be set above ground or snow level.
- It is unlawful to use a trap with teeth on the jaws
- All foothold traps must have at least three swiveling points and the chain must be centrally mounted at the base of the trap. One swiveling point must be at the base of the trap, one mid-way in the chain, and one at the trap's anchoring point.



3 SWIVEL POINTS (on dry-land sets)

Centrally Mounted at the Base of the Trap

Think of this as the central third of the base of the trap anywhere within the circle. This can be a J-hook coming directly from the base of the trap or a swivel attached to the trap with D-ring, lap link or link of chain.

Midway-in the Chain

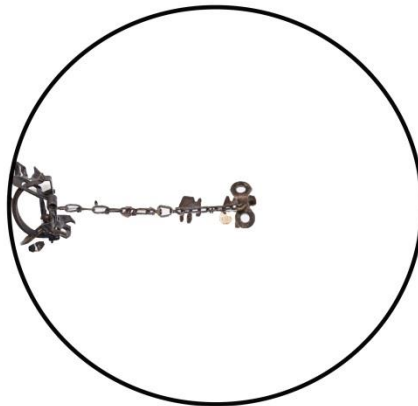
This is halfway between the base of the trap and the anchoring point. A double swivel (which technically has two swiveling points) is commonly used here, but another swiveling point is still required at the anchoring point and at the base of the trap.

The Anchoring Point

This is where the trap chain attaches to your anchoring device. An anchoring device may be a rebar stake, disposable or cable stake, or a drag. When using a drag, the anchoring point can be considered where the chain associated with the drag attaches to the trap chain. Remember that the use of drags is prohibited in WMDs 1-11, 14, 18, and 19.

The foothold trapping regulations for **WMDs 1-11, 14, 18, and 19** when set on dry land are as follows:

- Foothold traps must be securely anchored to the ground. **The use of drags is prohibited** in these WMDs.
- Foothold traps must have the catch circle cleared of woody vegetation, debris and manmade material that could cause entanglement of a trapped animal. Small sticks and rocks, and rotten/decaying woody material may be used for stepping guides, blocking, and backing for trap sets, if they are not rooted to the ground. A catch circle is defined as the area that can be circumscribed by the outer edge of a trap when the trap and trap chain are fully extended and moved in a circle (360°) around the anchoring point.



- These restrictions do not apply to foothold traps that when set, placed, and tended are fully or partially covered by water, those that are set on a muskrat “float”, or dog-proof raccoon traps.

In **WMDs 1 -6 and 8-11** no foothold trap may be used that has an inside jaw spread of more than 5 3/8 inches unless when set, placed, or tended the trap is fully or partially covered by water.

Killer-Type (Conibear) Trap Rules

Killer-type traps must be set within an exclusion device unless if 1) when set, placed, and tended, they are completely underwater, or if 2) the trap has an inside jaw spread 5 inches or less AND is

- either set so as to be partially covered by water at all times, or
- set under overhanging stream banks, or
- used at a blind set (without the use of bait, lure or visible attractor). Bait, lure and visible attractor do not include animal droppings (scat) or urine.

Exclusion Device Rules

For all exclusion devices, the jaws of the killer-type trap must be completely within the exclusion device; however, trap springs can be outside of the device.

Exclusion devices will have the following designs:

- (1) For traps with a jaw spread less than or equal to 5 inches (primarily used for marten trapping), the device must have an opening of 4 x 4 inches or less. The entrance hole may be placed on the end or on the side of the device, and the trap must be set a minimum of 18 inches from the closest edge of the entrance hole (Figure 1).
- (2) For traps with a jaw spread greater than 5 inches but less than 8 inches, two designs may be constructed. For both devices the trap must be placed no closer than 18 inches from the closest edge of the entrance hole.
 - a. The first design has an entrance hole on the end of the device that must not exceed 5 x 6 inches. A baffle must be placed no more than 6 inches back from the entrance hole and must not leave an opening greater than 5 x 6 inches. With the baffle in place, the entrance hole and interior opening must not overlap to create an unobstructed view to the interior of the exclusion device (Figure 2a).
 - b. For the second design the entrance hole must not exceed 6 x 7 inches and must be placed on the side of the device. A baffle must be placed at the edge of the entrance with the baffle opening opposite of the entrance hole, and the interior opening must not exceed 6 x 6 inches (Figure 2b).

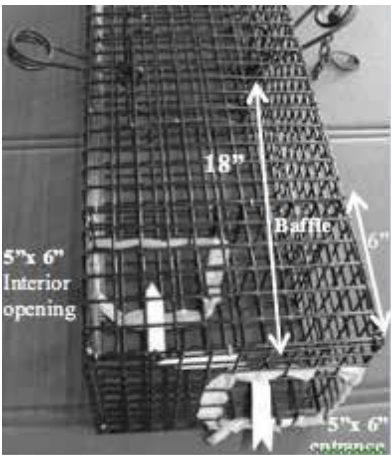
Exclusion devices can be constructed of wood, plastic, or wire mesh. If using wire mesh, the mesh cannot exceed 1 ½ by 1 ½ inches, or 1 inch by 2 inch openings (side to side). The wire mesh has to be 16 gauge or less (wire diameter of 0.05 inches or greater). The opening slot in the exclusion device that allows the trap springs to extend outside the device can be no more than 7 ½ inches wide and a height of no more than 1 ½ inches. The back of the device must be secured to withstand heavy pulling; if using wire mesh with a wood or plastic box, the wire mesh must wrap around two opposite sides of the box and be securely fastened. There must be at least 1 attachment point for each side of the device where a joint or panels come together. The trap must be anchored outside of the exclusion device. Bait must not be visible from above. When enclosed in an exclusion device, killer-type traps can be set directly on the ground, or elevated in trees or on poles, with no specific requirements as to the height above ground or diameter of the tree or pole.

1. *Flagging in these photos are used to illustrate the location of the entrance and is not a requirement.*



Figure 1. A photo showing 3 legal lynx exclusion devices made out of different materials: (from left to right) a) 1x1 inch wire, b) 1x2 inch wire, and c) 1x2 inch wire with a plastic newspaper box. All exclusion devices have a 4 x 4 inch opening and are constructed for a killer-type trap with a jaw spread less than or equal to 5 inches (primarily used for marten trapping).

2a



2b

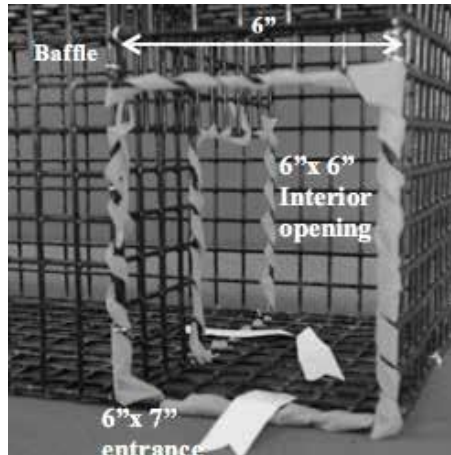


Figure 2. Legal exclusion devices for killer-type traps having a jaw spread between 5 and 8 inches. 2a. is an example of a device with an entrance hole on the end of the device. The entrance hole must not exceed 5 x 6 inches. A baffle must be placed no more than 6 inches back from the entrance hole and must not leave an opening greater than 5 x 6 inches. With the baffle in place, the entrance hole and interior opening may not overlap to create an unobstructed view to the interior of the exclusion device. 2b. is an example of a device where the entrance hole is placed on the side of the device and must not exceed 6 x 7 inches. A baffle must be placed at the edge of the entrance with the interior opening opposite of the entrance hole, and the interior opening must not exceed 6 x 6 inches.

IDENTIFYING RARE MAMMALS

Lynx vs. Bobcat Know the Difference

The most notable difference between a lynx and a bobcat is paw size. Lynx paws are about twice the size of bobcat paws. Lynx can also be distinguished from bobcats by the tip of their tail, which is completely black (bobcat tail tips are black on the upper side [dorsal side] and white underneath). Lynx have more prominent ear tufts, paler coloration, less spotting, and longer legs than a bobcat. Please know the difference between bobcat, lynx, and fisher tracks.



Note the long ear tufts, large feet, and completely black-tipped tail of the lynx.

If you trap a bobcat that looks like a cross between a lynx and a bobcat, we would like to know about it. We have recovered several lynx-bobcat hybrids in north central Maine and are interesting in documenting other specimens. Remember, if you are uncertain whether you have trapped a lynx or a bobcat call a biologist or warden immediately and before dispatching the animal. If you dispatched a bobcat and upon examination think it has unusual characteristics for a bobcat, please contact Cory Mosby or Jen Vashon at 207-941-4466, as we are interested in learning more about hybridization between these closely related cats.

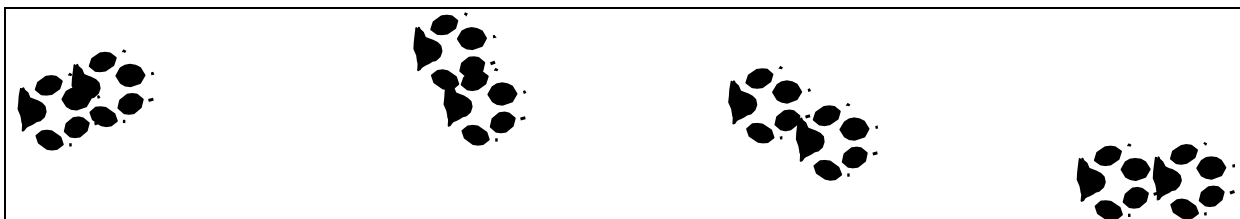
TRACK AND TRACK PATTERNS FOR COUGAR, LYNX, AND WOLF; WITH COMPARISONS TO MORE COMMON SPECIES

Species	General Shape	Walking Stride	Print Size (Front Foot)	Track Pattern
Bobcat	General round appearance. Heel points in slightly different direction than toes. No nail marks, but if present, attached to toe marks.	6" to 14"	Length - 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Width - 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " to 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ "	Direct or double register walking pattern. Trail pattern zigzags right-left-right-left.
Lynx	Same as bobcat but tracks show a lot more hair. Smaller pads than a cougar.	11" to 18"	Length - 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ " to 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ " Width - 3" to 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " Outline of hair impression Length - 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ " Width - 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	Same as bobcat
Cougar	Same as bobcat	20" to 32"	Length - 3" to 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Width - 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ " to 3 $\frac{9}{16}$ "	Walking pattern similar to other cats. Deep snow may show belly and tail drag marks.
Coyote	4 toes, oval shaped track, Front nails often close together. Side nails often do not register.	Eastern: 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 26"	Eastern: Length - 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ " to 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Width - 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	Trail pattern usually is in a straight line. Walking pattern is usually direct registering
Dog	Similar to wolves and coyotes. Inner toes often splayed outwards.	Varies with breed	Varies with breed	Trail pattern sloppy, wandering, not usually in a straight line. Walking pattern is often double register.
Wolf	4 toes, symmetrical track, longer than wide, more rounded than a coyote, nail marks not attached to toe mark (same as coyote), 4 nails register.	Algonquin: 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	Algonquin: Length - 4" - 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " Width - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " - 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Other: Length - 3 $\frac{7}{8}$ " - 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Width - 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " - 5"	Trail pattern usually is in a straight line. Walking pattern is usually direct registering.

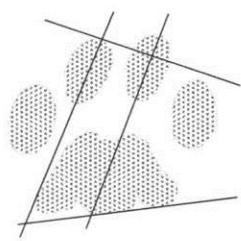
Direct register - a walking pattern where the animal's forefoot is overprinted by the hind foot.



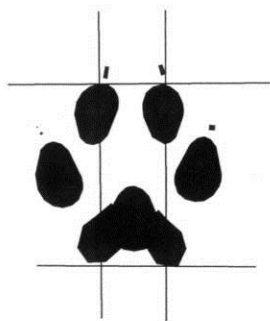
Double or Indirect register - a walking pattern where the animal's hind foot does not fall directly on the front track.



Comparisons of canine and cat tracks, and bobcat, lynx, and cougar tracks. Illustrations follow those in Rezendes (1992) and Elbroch (2003).



Asymmetrical Shape
Cat Family



Symmetrical Shape
Large Domestic Dog

**Bobcat
Pattern**



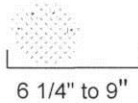
3" to 5 3/8"



6"
to
14"



**Lynx
Pattern**



6 1/4" to 9"



11"
to
18"



**Cougar
Pattern**



8" to 11"



20"
to
32"



Dense fur leaves a
powder puff appearance

Heel-pad is usually not
visible in snow

LYNX PRINT, ACTUAL SIZE



COUGAR PRINT, ACTUAL SIZE